Next Meeting:
March 4 at
Danbury Hospital
Auditorium

Join the folks from the Microsoft store for a magic carpet ride through all the exciting features of the new XBox One — and find out how it miraculously morphs from a gaming console to a full media control center.

Plus:
More on
what to do when
Microsoft rolls up the
rug on Windows XP support.

XBOX ONE

Directors' Notes

A meeting of your board of directors was held on Wednesday, February 12, 2014. Attending were Richard Corzo, Jim Scheef, Andy Woodruff, Bert Goff, Lisa Leifels, Richard Teasdale, Bruce Preston. Guest: Annette van Ommeren

The minutes of last meeting were accepted.

Treasurer's Report
January 2014

Balance on hand 1/1/14 $4,560.23

INCOME
Dues	$401.49
Total Income:	$401.49

EXPENSES
Resource Center Phone & Internet	$77.60
Renewal Postcard Postage	$7.59
Newsletter Postage	$40.92
Newsletter Printing	$88.00
Insurance (annual)	$901.00
Web Hosting (3 yrs)	
Total Expenses	$1,115.11

Balance on hand 1/31/14 $3,846.61

Membership Report

Nov 5 - Hackerspace - Mike Kaltschnee
Dec 3 - Facebook & Pinterest - Bill DeRosa
Jan 7 - Apple Ecosystem - Richard Corzo

Meeting Attendance

02/04 - Windows 8.1 - 25

Old Business

1. General meetings

• February 4: Jay Ferron-Windows 8.1. Preview: Bruce Preston, Review: Joan Galligan

• March 4: Microsoft Store representative: Xbox One and End of XP (about 45 minutes) followed by Bruce

describing "What Can You Do with an Old XP Machine?" as a lead-in to the workshop. Richard will e-mail and/or call Microsoft Store rep. to see if they can do the Xbox One presentation. Note: Jim will not be able to do Ask DACS this month. We have two back-ups.

• March 15: XP to Ubuntu Linux Workshop-Bruce Preston, David Mawdsley, Jim Ritterbusch, Sean Henderson and Charlie Bovaird will conduct.

• April 1: Android-Jeff Postolowski, WCSU. Preview: _____, Review: _____

• May 6: John Patrick-State of the Internet. Preview: _____, Review: _____

• Possible future topics:

° We've started to do a "Meet the SIG" segment between the Ask DACS session and the featured presentation. We did the Mobile Devices/Windows 8 SIG in February. Others available for future months: Drupal, Web Design.

° "LifeStream" monitoring. Mike Kaltschnee mentioned FitBit (currently available at BestBuy) or other 'wearable electronics.' Andy spoke with Jeff Schlicht, professor of Health Promotion & Exercise at WestConn, about a possible presentation at DACS re wearable electronic devices that monitor exercise and/or body functions. At present Jeff is not committed. Bill may have access to someone who has Google Glass, and perhaps other health-related wearable devices. Another device - Pebble Watch

° Andy suggested a session on creating a web site of various types: blog, brochure, e-commerce site, etc. - making use of such products/services as site builder (online or on PC), turn-key sites, etc. Andy suggested that as a computer group we should do some sort of session that would answer the question: "I think I need a web site, what are my options?" This might involve a "high level" overview of the various approaches. Andy (and to some extent Bruce) wanted to talk about the entry level 'turn-key' systems where you must live within the constraints of the design, where Annette is more concerned about "What happens if it doesn't do what you want it to do?" Annette and Andy will discuss creating an outline that describes at a high-level what components might be a part of a web site and the repercussions they

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PROGRAM: *vpprograms@dacs.org*

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APCUG LIAISON: Bill Saturno (203) 437-0611

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR: Charles Bovaird: *aam@mags.net*

RESOURCE CENTER: (203) 748-4330 • **WEB SITE:** *http://www.dacs.org*

HelpLine

Our former telephone HelpLine has been replaced by our web-based DACS Community Forum at http://forum.dacs.org. We have topic-specific forums where DACS members can post questions. Questions may be answered by SIG leaders or other DACS members. If none of the categories fit your question, just post it to the Ask DACS forum.

Topic	Forum
.NET Programming	ASP.Net and C#VB.Net SIG
Digital cameras/scanners/image processing	Digital Imaging SIG
Content Management Systems	Drupal SIG
Linux	Linux SIG
Mac and iPhone/iPad/iPod touch	Apple SIG
PC maintenance	PC Maintenance SIG
Smartphones & Tablets	Mobile Devices SIG
Virtual machine software	Virtual Computing SIG
Desktop publishing and website design	Web Site Design SIG
Windows	Windows SIG

have upon the construction of the site. Annette and Andy do not have a presentation ready at this time.

° Lisa suggested a "decision tree" presentation - "What should I get?" - Windows or Mac, Desktop, All-in-One, Notebook, Tablet, or even SmartPhone - Android or iOS, etc. Lots of decisions - how to decide what meets your needs. We think this would be a 'tough' presentation to pull off but a lively session. Bruce will concentrate on desktops, Richard Corzo will concentrate on mobile devices, Jim and Charlie will work on defining the metrics.

° Video production - putting something up on YouTube. Vine, Instagram, etc. Approach WestConn or Naugatuck to see if a student might do it. Perhaps for a Senior project? Andy is currently working on a project; he says he might be able to do it in 6 months or so. Also "personal videos" that might be put on Twitter or Flickr. Andy potentially could do mid-to-late summer.

° Home theater systems. Jim is in the process of assembling one, might put together a program based upon his experiences. Andy will look for an independent home theater installation company. Comparison of services such as Xfinity, CableVision, DirecTV etc. Carston Stereo might be a good prospect - Andy will talk to them. Richard will write an article on watching YouTube on TV.

° Digital cameras - higher end digital cameras. Explanation of what they have that you don't get in a phone, etc. What is RAW mode, HDR, sensor size, what causes noise, etc? Andy offered to do it - but not for March. Jeff suggested that we might be able to get a member from Candlewood Camera Club, Bob Green is a member.

° 3D Printing - have not heard from Bill Saturno.

° Jim would like to see things like the Raspberry Pi, Arduino etc. Jim will see if he can find a speaker, perhaps someone from Hackerspace.

° Andy suggested an overview of the "app development" process. Discussion followed as to how it might be made interesting to general populace.

2. Opening/filled positions

° We are looking for an "evangelist" or someone to promote DACS on Facebook beyond what we are doing

Meeting Review

Windows 8.1 - with Jay Ferron

by Joan Galligan

AS A DOS USER FROM the early days, I was excited when Windows arrived! After installing a mouse and a hard drive, and taking a few lessons, we were happily using Windows. Local high schools, computer stores, colleges, and public and private enterprises all held classes. (Charlie Bovaird ran a DACS Windows class that was great.) We were all on our way to an improved operating system which built upon itself with each intuitive upgrade, bar a couple, and got better and better. Decades passed.

And then there was the Touch Screen. Cell phones, iPhones, eReaders, Tablets, a lot of Mobile Devices with internet capabilities and different operating systems. They duplicate some of the uses we have for our laptops and they are easy to carry around. And they don't need a mouse.

So Microsoft got a great idea. Why not make a Windows OS that uses a touch screen. And they did. But I guess they thought that since most of us were using mobile devices with a touch screen, the transition would be seamless. It is not! There are not enough learning resources available for such a major transition. Fortunately we have Jay Ferron.

Most people would agree that the worst thing about adapting to Windows 8.1 is the missing Start button. We're all creatures of habit. So, what to do? Immediately, freeware programs were developed to replace it. But then there's that old expression, 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.' We're all resistant to change. That is the dilemma.

As a longtime Windows user, when you start up your new Windows 8 PC, there is instant confusion. Rows and rows of icons, some familiar, some not, some moving; and although your mouse will open a program, without lessons you will not be able to close it, find your old programs, or do much else. Staples gave me a 30-minute one-on-one lesson, which raised more questions than it answered... even though it was an hour.

The tech made it look easy; but when I got home, I was totally confused. I scoured the internet and found bits of information here and there, which I experimented with. Thanks to the Mobile Device/Windows SIG I've been able to exchange information with other Windows 8 users and I'm well on my way to an exciting experience.

The meeting with Jay Ferron was fantastic. It was like my intro lesson at Staples on steroids times 20. And the good news is that the new 'Modern' (not metro) Start Page, and the missing Start button are the best things ever to happen to Windows.

Because all Windows 8 files are indexed, you need only to start typing and a search will begin for whatever you need. It could be a program, control panel, your favorite game, Windows help, the C: drive, the documents folder, your HomeGroup.... anything at all. You don't need to remember the folder it's in or the correct spelling. The search engine is like nothing you've ever seen. Just think of how many mouse clicks that saves. Start button? You'll never want to use it again.

Every program you install creates an icon. You choose whether or not to have each icon appear on the startup Modern Page. Icons on your Modern Page stay there by your choice and they can be removed, rearranged, resized, and put into groups right there.

You can also see the title & icon of *every* program on your PC, in alphabetical order, with the click of a down-arrow.

Your familiar desktop is still there and can be accessed from the Modern page. You can open your old programs from the desktop, if you'd rather; but that's two steps instead of one. Once the desktop is opened, you can toggle to and from the Modern page by pressing the Windows logo key from either the keyboard or the bottom left of the desktop icon tray.

The thing that really blew my mind was when Jay demonstrated that the Windows 8 operating system is a memory manager with the ability to manage multiple tasks. TRY THIS AT HOME: Open 5 or 6 programs. Then open Task Manager and see that it shows them all, but the CPU is not doing anything. Applications you are not using sleep automatically, leaving memory free for the program you are using. This redesign in Windows 8 makes it the fastest task manager using the least resources.

I left the meeting really excited to continue my Windows 8 adventure. Up until now I've been running my old and new PCs side by side, moving apps as I go. Now I keep looking for new Windows 8 features on my Window 7 PC. My next challenge is changing from POP to IMAP and setting up my email.

On a personal note, I saved $100 by not getting the touch screen. I can't wrap my mind around leaving the keyboard to touch the screen yet.

There are so many more things we learned from Jay Ferron. I hope he comes again soon. In the meantime, I'll be sharing knowledge at the Mobile Device/Windows 8 SIG, which meets every 4th Monday at the DACS Resource Center.

Meet the SIG
Mobile Devices and Windows 8
By Jim Scheef

We have started a review of each special interest group (SIG) at the general meetings. The SIGs are the best part of DACS, yet many DACS members have never attended a SIG meeting. The intent is to familiarize those attending the general meetings with a SIG they might find interesting.

This month's SIG began as the Mobile Devices SIG, which covered all manner of hand-held devices from smart phones and e-book readers to tablets. In a grand gesture of egalitarianism, we covered both Apple and Android devices. Later we added Windows 8, since the user interface, if not the actual operating system, appeared on these same small touch-screen devices as well as on traditional full notebook and desktop computers, and the touch-screen interface is a primary feature.

The SIG meets on the fourth Monday of each month in the DACS Resource Center (*http://dacs.org/sigroups/directions.htm*).

Each month we have a prepared topic to present, while allowing time for questions from members. Over the months, the prepared topics have ranged from how to manage pictures and music on your mobile device, to installing and using apps, and to tips and tricks. With Win 8 we have discussed how to do things we take for granted on earlier versions of Windows, but which seem hard (or impossible) to do on Win 8. Another topic has been the differences between Modern apps and the equivalent traditional Windows applications. This is a very interactive group, where questions are the whole point. Be sure to bring your mobile devices when you come, or just come and ask questions about what to buy.

Meeting Preview

Xbox One
More Than Just Fun and Games?

By Richard Corzo

DACS IS GOING TO TRY something new this month. We've never had a program on gaming consoles, but for our March meeting we're going to hear about the Xbox One (*http://www.xbox.com*) from the folks at the Danbury Mall Microsoft Store. Most of us have played games on our computers and maybe on our new mobile devices. This should be interesting even for those who have never tried gaming on a console. Why are kids so addicted?

The Xbox One is Microsoft's latest gaming console, meant to replace their previous very successful Xbox 360 console. We'll get to see some of the games for the Xbox One, like the latest Call of Duty or maybe Zoo Tycoon. What makes the Xbox One more powerful than its predecessor? How well do the Kinect motion sensing and voice commands work?

The presenters will explain the different options: buying games on disc versus downloading from the Xbox One Game Store. We'll hear about the Xbox Live Gold membership which is needed for multiplayer games and some other features.

We'll also find out that the Xbox One is more than a gaming console. It's also an entertainment center. It's got a live TV integration feature and can control your cable or satellite box, your TV, and your home theater receiver. It runs apps such as Netflix, Hulu Plus, YouTube, and even Skype using the included Kinect camera.

I have to admit this will all be a new experience for me, but it should be very entertaining and I can't think of a better opportunity to bring your kids or grandkids and introduce them to DACS.

At the end of the presentation we'll hear about the end of Windows XP support and what that means for you and your old computer that may still be running XP. (One option is to install Linux instead. See the separate announcement about the March 15th XP to Ubuntu Linux workshop on the website or in last month's newsletter.)

DACS meetings are held at Danbury Hospital auditorium. (Go to *www.dacs.org* to find directions and parking info). Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for registration and casual networking. Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. with a Q&A period (Ask DACS), followed by announcements and a short break. The featured presentation begins at 8:00 p.m. The meeting is scheduled to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

DACS General Meetings are free and open to the public. Members and prior attendees are encouraged to extend invitations to anyone interested in this topic.

Let's join heads!

Do you have a special technology interest you would like to share or learn more about? Join a DACS SIG or start one. You don't have to be a nerd or a guru—just have a curiosity for what's out there and an interest in sharing or discovering with others like you. Just send an e-mail to *dacsprez@ dacs.org,* or talk to one of our officers at the next meeting, and say something like "I want to start a SIG!" or "Wouldn't it be nice if we had a SIG on . . .?**"**

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now (just posting our meeting announcements). We asked for volunteers at the January general meeting. Annette and Jim suggested that we put photos and links on the Facebook page more often, especially after meetings.

3. Bob Green is frustrated with entering membership data into CiviCRM. Jim and Richard C. will take over this activity until such time that they have gotten the system to perform properly. Jim must upgrade CiviCRM, having upgraded Drupal.

4. Dave Green has received a letter from our insurance carrier Zurich North America notifying us that the company providing us with small business insurance, Maryland Casualty Company will be replaced with a new one, Foremost Insurance Company. Bert had offered to look into options. Jim reported that he had investigated with an agency where he has a contact, and our carrier at that time was the only one offering coverage appropriate to our needs. So we just need to update our address with the insurance carrier.

5. Bill DeRosa gave us some feedback on our Facebook page. Do we want to make any changes in how we use it? We decided that while his suggestions may be valid, they may be impractical. There isn't enough 'return on investment.' Jim suggested that instead of posting articles on Facebook that we at least post links to the DACS site. We should also continue our presence on Meetup and LinkedIn. Richard invited people to RSVP on Meetup if they plan to attend a meeting.

New Business

1. Jim looked into changing our printer for the newsletter to Infinity Printing. Here is the information he got:
   - 75 copies folded to 8½ x 11 (we must fold them in half and fasten at the top and side)
   - 12 pages $78
   - 16-pages $97

   Generally, they would give us a 3-day turnaround. This is $10 less than the current cost. Jim will discuss with Charlie and Allan to see if they object to change of printer.

2. Bert has supplied a comparison of annual expenses for 2012 and 2013. He has also offered to come up with a budget for 2014.

Adjourned: 9:30

—Bruce Preston

Special Interest Groups

SIG NOTES: March 2014

Apple. Focuses on all aspects of the Mac and iPhone operating systems.
Contact: Richard Corzo (*macsig @dacs.org*).
Meets 2nd Monday, 7 p.m. at DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: Mar 10

Digital Imaging. All about digital cameras, retouching, and printing using various programs.
Contact: Ken Graff at 203 648-9747 *(thedigitalwiz @gmail.com)*.
Meets last Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: Spring 2014

Drupal. Covers all things on Drupal, the open source content management system (CMS).
Contact: Jim Scheef (*jscheef @dacs.org*).
Meets on the second Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center, or go to the DACS Community Forum (*http://www.dacs.org/forum/*) within the Members only area.
Next meeting: Mar 13

Jobs. Networking and jobs search
Contact: Charles Bovaird, 203-792-7881 (*aam @mags.net*).
Go to DACS Community Forum (*http://forum.dacs.org for job listings*).

Linux. Helps in installing and maintaining the Linux operating system. Also of interest to Apple owners using OS X.

Contact: Dave Mawdsley, linuxsig @dacs.org
Meets 3rd Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: Mar 19

Mobile Devices. Focuses on smartphones, tablets, and e-readers of all makes and models.
Contact: Richard Corzo and Jim Scheef (*Mobilesig @dacs.org*)
Meets 4th Monday, 7 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center
Next Meeting: Mar 24

PC Maintenance. Review of PC hardware and OpSys maintenance and use.
Contact: Charles Bovaird, 203-792-7881 (*aam @ mags.net*).
Go to DACS Community Forum (*http://forum.dacs.org*).

Server. Explores Back Office server and client applications, including Win NT Servers and MS Outlook. SIG is on hiatus and presently merged into the Drupal SIG.
Contact: Jim Scheef (*jscheef @telemarrksys.com*), or go to the DACS Community Forum: *http://www.dacs.org/forum/,* within the Members-only area

Web Design and DTP. Learn about Adobe software for web, graphics and desktop publishing.
Contact: Annette van Ommeren (*avo @annagraphics.com*).
Meets 3rd Tuesday, 7-9 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: Mar 18

SIG News & Events

Apple. February's meeting was dedicated to unlocking an iPhone and switching to a different carrier.

Unlocking a phone allows you to switch to a different carrier, or to buy a prepaid SIM to save money on phone calls when you are traveling overseas. To unlock a phone you need to have satisfied the contract on a subsidized phone, usually two years. On AT&T you can fill out an online request form here: *https://www.att.com/deviceunlock/*. Upon approval you'll be sent an e-mail with instructions. The process involves backing up your phone, which can be done more quickly by connecting to iTunes rather than using iCloud. Then you can erase the contents of the phone by opening Settings > General > Reset and selecting Erase All Content and Settings. This takes just a couple of minutes. The final step is to restore from the backup, which takes much longer, depending on how much you had stored on the phone. You are supposed to get a message in iTunes that your phone is now unlocked, but I never did.

To confirm whether my iPhone was successfully unlocked, I went to the T-Mobile store. They popped in a T-Mobile SIM and confirmed that my iPhone was indeed unlocked. Then I had to make a decision as to whether I would leave AT&T and try T-Mobile. Their pricing was more

attractive but I couldn't be sure how happy I would be with their coverage without trying it. I decided to take a chance and was able to get my number transferred over in less than an hour's time. They told me that was unusually fast.

If you go into Settings > About, you'll get a message that there is a carrier update available, and the update allows text messaging and other things to work properly.

When I got home, I found I was able to make a voice call with no problem, but the data connection with my iPhone 4S was very slow, showing E for EDGE rather than 3G or 4G. This isn't a real problem for me at home, as I'm able to use my home Wi-Fi network. But I was curious as to why my iPad Air on T-Mobile was seeing a fast 4G connection at home. My research turned up the fact that, although my older iPhone 4S was a quad-band, it did not support the less common 1700 MHz frequency that T-Mobile still uses on some of its cell towers. As a result in some of the more remote places I visited, I would only get a slow EDGE connection but in more populated areas, such as where I work, I was getting a fine "4G" connection.

Time will tell if I am happy enough to stay with my new carrier. I would expect improvements to come both from T-Mobile continuing to upgrade their network, and when I eventually replace my iPhone with a new model.

March 2014
Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Feb 2014 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	**Apr 2014** S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30			1
2	3	4 **General Meeting** 7:00 PM	5 **Board of Directors** 7:00 PM	6	7	8
9	10 **Apple** 7:00 PM Richard Corzo *macsig@dacs.org*	11	12	13 **Drupal** 7:00 PM Jim Scheef 860-355-0034	14	15 **DACS.DOC Deadline** ───── **1:30-3:30 XP to Ubuntu Workshop**
16	17	18 **Web Design& DTP** Annette van Ommeren 7:00 - 9:00 PM *avanommeren@dacs.org*	19 **Linux** 7:30 -9:30 PM Dave Mawdsley *linuxsig@dacs.org*	20	21	22
23	24 **Mobile Devices** 7:00 PM Jim Scheef & Richard Corzo *mobilesig@dacs.org*	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	**Special Workshop** Convert Your XP Machine to Ubuntu Saturday, March 15, 1:30-3:30 PM The workshop will consist of: • a brief discussion of various system requirements, options and considerations • a demonstration of running directly from the "Live CD" • a demonstration of doing a full installation to an XP machine. Location: DACS Resource Center in the lower level of Ives Manor at 198 Main Street, Danbury, CT, 06810 Contact: Bruce Preston (*bpreston@dacs.org*)				

Home Entertainment

Watching YouTube on Your TV

By Richard Corzo

WE'VE ALL WATCHED YouTube videos on our computers, whether it was on youtube.com, or a video embedded in another site's web page. Sometimes you run across videos that you might actually like to sit back and watch on your large-screen TV rather than on your computer or even smaller-screened mobile device. You may already have that ability and not realize it.

If you have an Internet-connected "smart" TV, a gaming console, a video streaming box like a Roku or Apple TV, or maybe even a Blu-ray player, you certainly have Netflix, and also very likely a YouTube app that you can use to choose and watch YouTube videos on your TV. I myself have YouTube on my LG TV, TiVo DVR, and Apple TV device.

While it's likely you have already set up the Wi-Fi connection on your externally connected device, if you have just a smart TV, you may not yet have it connected to your home network. In some cases (like my LG TV), you have to separately purchase a Wi-Fi adapter that plugs into a USB slot on your TV. Whichever TV or device you want to connect, you will need to find the network settings that allow you to choose your Wi-Fi network (and not your neighbor's) and enter the Wi-Fi password.

Once your TV or device is connected to the Internet, you should be able to use your device's remote control to enter a search term for the video you want to watch. That will work, but there are progressively easier ways to find your videos and watch them on the TV. Your device may have a remote control app available for your mobile phone or tablet that allows you to enter the search term using the on-screen keyboard of your mobile device, but you can do even better than that.

To start you will need a Google account. If you already have an account using another Google service (Search, Maps, Play Store for Android, Picasa, etc.), you may use that one. Otherwise, create a Google account using an e-mail address from any provider. It doesn't have to be a Gmail account. With a YouTube account you can subscribe to channels created by other YouTube users, or save individual videos you find by selecting Add to Watch Later, Add to Favorites, or Add to Playlist.

Then in the YouTube app on your TV or TV-connected device, you will need to sign in to your YouTube Google account. The YouTube app should have menu items like My Subscriptions, and at least one of Playlists, Favorites, or Watch Later, where you can find the videos you have previously saved. OK, so it's getting easier; but it's a two-step process of saving the video (like a bookmark), and then finding the saved video in your YouTube TV app. We can do even better.
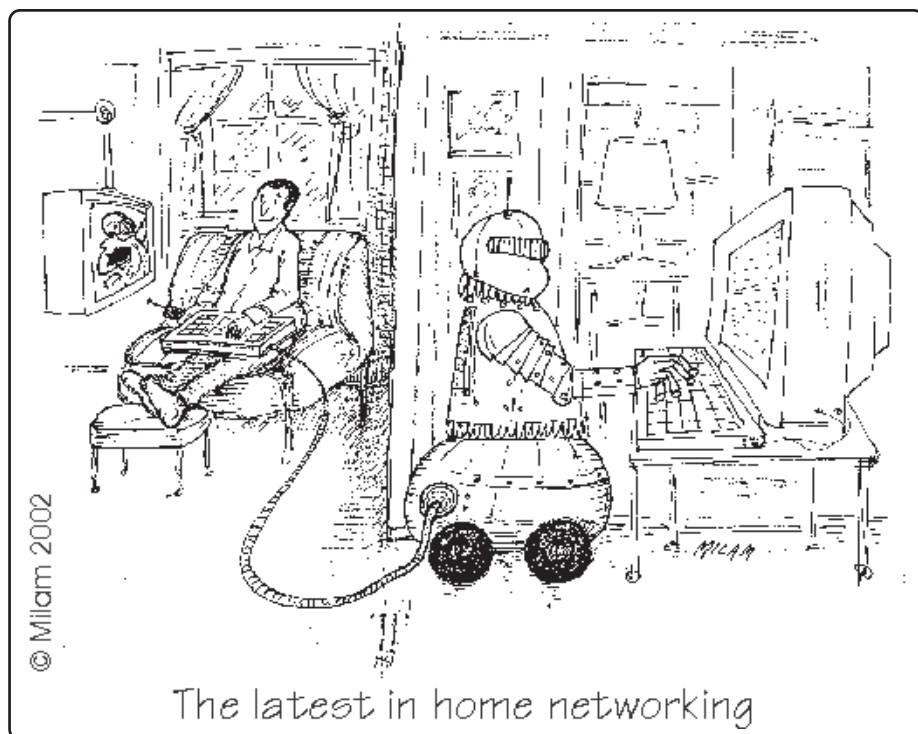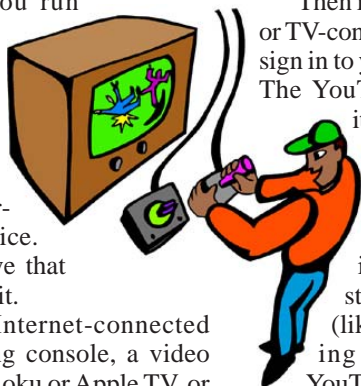
You may have heard of a little device called the Google Chromecast that plugs in to your TV's HDMI port, a power source (USB port on your TV or a power outlet), and your Wi-Fi network. It doesn't come with a remote control, so it requires a smartphone or tablet to control it. You can "cast" a video from the YouTube app on your mobile device, or from the Chrome browser on your computer. But if you already have a smart TV or TV-connected device mentioned above, then chances are you don't need the Chromecast. You can "cast" a video from your mobile device's YouTube app or YouTube in a browser on your computer.

First you need to pair the mobile device or browser with the YouTube app on your TV. On the TV YouTube app, look for the settings of your account, where you may see Pair Device. (My somewhat older LG TV does not have this option.) If you find the option, select it. It will instruct you to go to *http://www.youtube.com/pair* in a browser and enter a code to complete the pairing. If your mobile device has a YouTube app, you can use that instead. In your mobile YouTube app, find the settings and look for Connected TVs. That's where you'll enter the code.

Now, when you watch a YouTube video on your computer or mobile device, in the upper or lower right part of the video you'll see a rectangular icon with a tiny Wi-Fi symbol in the lower left corner. That's where you can choose the TV to "cast" the video instead of watching it on your computer or mobile device.

The Apple TV box uses a different method to play a video on your TV that doesn't require pairing the iPhone or iPad. Just activate AirPlay from the iOS 7 Control Center (quick settings that appear when you swipe up from the bottom) and choose the Apple TV instead of the iPhone or iPad. This allows you to play not only YouTube videos, but any content from your iOS device.
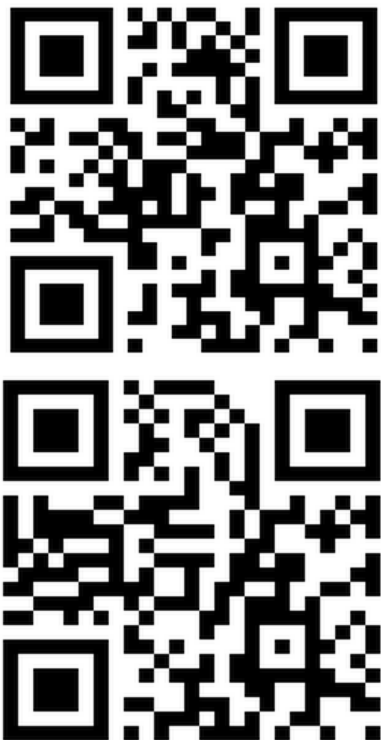

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The latest in home networking

Data Trails

What You Need to Know about QR Codes

By Sandy Berger

IF YOU'VE SEEN QR or Quick Response Codes, but don't know what they mean, this article will explain it all for you. QR codes are becoming more and more prevalent and offer additional information on many of the things you read and see. QR codes can be found in many current magazines and newspapers.

QR codes: They are small squares filled with black square dots arranged in a grid pattern on a white background. If you look carefully at a QR code, you will see that each one is unique in the placement of the small black and white squares. While this doesn't mean anything to the eye of the beholder, the placement of the dots defines the additional data that is embedded in the code. The QR code at top will lead you to the website of The Pilot, a newspaper I write for. The one below will lead you to the home page on my Compu-KISS website.

Although most QR codes are black and white, they can also contain stars, squares, and other color and/or black and white images.

QR codes are now linking paper content like newspapers and magazines to digital content. To understand QR codes, you can think of them as paper-based hyperlinks that work like bar codes. To access the digital content, you need a QR reader which you can easily download to your smart phone or tablet. Most of these are free. They use the camera in your phone to read the QR code and take you to the digital content.

You can find a QR code on a newspaper or magazine article, a business card, or a menu. Actually, QR codes can be printed on just about anything. I've even seen them printed on T-shirts. Of course, they can also be used digitally. For example a QR code could be displayed on a web page to transfer information directly to a cell phone. A QR code can even be added to a Tweet.

To access the information in a QR code, after you download a free QR reader, you simply start the app and hold your mobile phone or tablet about 4" to 6", with the camera squarely above the QR code. When you get it positioned properly, you phone will take the picture and display the additional information on your device. You don't have to press any buttons or the screen, everything is done automatically.

QR codes can give you many different types of additional information. If you see one on an advertisement, it will probably lead you to more information about the product. A QR code on a business card can lead you to more information about that person or company. QR codes can lead you to things like coupons, movie trailers, phone numbers, or directions. I find them invaluable when on a recipe because they allow me to view the recipe on a tablet and use it immediately in the kitchen.

Several companies have developed further enhancements for QR codes allowing them to hidden in a picture. They embed imperceptible digital information in pictures or behind text, creating an invisible hyperlink to online content. They can even embed a QR code in an audio file.

Digimarc is a company in the forefront of the QR world. I use the free Digimarc app because it works with their own "hidden" codes as well as regular QR codes and barcodes. It is available for both Android and Apple.

When a QR code is hidden, there will usually be a note to that effect or a small logo on or near the picture to indicate that it is, in fact, a QR code. Even though you don't see the code, you can hold your phone or tablet over the picture to activate the code.

QR codes are very popular in Japan and are becoming more and more popular here as people find new uses for them. I imagine that sometime soon, all smart phones and tablets will come with a QR code reader so you won't have to download one.

If you are interested in creating a QR code for your T-shirt, business card, or website, the easiest way to do it is to use a third-party QR code generator. I created the two QR codes shown in this article using a website called Kaywa at *http://qrcode. kaywa.com*. Of course, Kaywa has professional options that you have to pay for, but creating a few simple QR codes is completely free.

SANDY BERGER *is a nationally respected computer authority and founder of Compu-KISS, a technology information Website (www.compukiss.com) You can reach her at Sandy@compukiss. com*

DACS Community Forum

Ever wanted to ask a question and get an answer without waiting for the next general meeting? How about sharing news with other DACS members, or communicating with fellow participants in a SIG you attend?

The DACS Community Forum (*http://www.dacs.org/forum/*) is another benefit of being a DACS member, and it's open 24/7. Once you register there you'll be able to post questions, answers, and comments. You can even set up an RSS subscription to be notified of updates to the forums.

Try out the DACS forum today!

Ask DACS

February 2014

Moderated and reported by Jim Scheef

WE WELCOME QUESTIONS FROM the floor at the start of our General Meetings. The role of moderator is to try to guide the discussion to a likely solution to the problem.In addition, members who are not able to attend the General meeting may submit questions to *askdacs@dacs.org*. We will ask the question for you and post the reply in *dacs.doc* and on *dacs.org*. Please provide as much information as possible, since we can't probe during the session.

Q – I noticed recently that FT Downloader is running on my WinXP machine. The search results on Google gave a mixed opinion on whether it is malware or something from Microsoft.

A – Jay Ferron, our speaker for the evening, said that FT Downloader (*ftdownloader.com*) is a download manager that comes with a lot of shareware. The site indicates that it is used with *FilesTube.com* (filestube.to when you open the link) which appears to be a download site for all kinds of files, including home-made videos, music, and 'archive' files (whatever they might be). I would avoid this site. In further research I found that FT Downloader will bundle other files with the program you want to download. As such, it may be benign, but I would remove it post haste along with any other program that sets an autostart registry entry without asking.

BTW, the ".to" TLD (top level domain) in filestube.to is officially the Pacific island nation of Tonga. However, Wikipedia indicates it is "Often used unofficially for Torrent, Turin, Toronto, Tokyo, or Tocantins". Torrent is a fast download protocol used for both good and evil. Caveat emptor.

Q – I have an application called ADW Cleaner which helped solve a recent virus problem and FT Downloader showed up in the quarantine. Should I use this program to remove FT Downloader?

A – Again, Jay Ferron: That cleaner program will show things in quarantine that aren't necessarily malware (like cookies) so you need to be careful. Not everything is quarantine-able.

DACS has never recommended any of the "cleaner" programs because most do more harm than good. Your mileage may vary. You can use System Information (Start|Accessories|System Tools) to find the autostart registry key. Delete that key and reboot so FT Downloader is not running. Then uninstall the program.

Q – A member reported trouble getting to the Internet using the Hospital's open Wi-Fi in the auditorium.

A – It turns out that the Hospital has returned to imposing a "terms of use" step to obtain an Internet connection. After selecting the guest Wi-Fi from the list of available access points, one must open a browser and attempt to open a website. After you check the "I agree" box, you will be able to reach the Internet. While most people are familiar with this process used by most hotels, the terms of use page was secured with an "invalid" security certificate. Windows correctly warned of this condition, which added the unfamiliar step of bypassing the certificate warning. Hopefully, the certificate will be corrected in time for our meeting in March.

Q – My Hewlett Packard (HP) desktop machine running Win7 got into trouble where it was not receiving Microsoft updates. A manual update check said there were no updates when we know updates were released. So I reinstalled Windows using non-HP OEM media. This went fine except now I would like to reinstall the HP "niceties". How can I do that?

A – HP "recovery disks" are intended to return the machine to exactly the way it was when it came out of the box.

Thus it will reformat the hard drive and may even wipe out other partitions. Generally I remove the hard drive from the problem machine, connect the disk to another machine using a USB adapter and copy all the user files off the disk. Another option is to boot from a live CD (either Linux- or Windows-based) and copy user files to an external drive. Once all the user files are secure, the so-called recovery disk becomes a more acceptable option. Since you have reinstalled Windows, you now need all the device drivers and other programs supplied by HP. If these files are available, they will be on the HP website (*hp.com*). Look for support. On the support page, look for downloads, and then use the search tool to find your machine. It is also possible that the device drivers are on a "recovery partition". If this part of the drive is not immediately visible, you can often use the Drive Manager to assign it a drive letter. You can then navigate to the partition and browse the files to find what you need. One or a mixture of these techniques should find what you need.

A couple years ago, I had a disagreement with HP support over upgrading an HP Pavilion desktop machine from Vista Home to Win7 Pro. The exposé on how to do this was written by Mr. Some Dude in the November, 2012, issue of DACS.doc (http://dacs.org/archive/2012-11/feature1.htm). At the meeting this month I misspoke when I said that the BIOS prevented non-HP OEM Windows from installing. Actually, the problem did not show up until after the installation, when Windows tried to activate. The activation would fail. Flashing the motherboard BIOS to the regular Award BIOS for that board in effect turned the HP OEM motherboard into a regular "retail" ASUS motherboard that works with any version of Windows. A side benefit to the 'new' BIOS is the availability of many additional features, like overclocking.

Q – Over the years I have become accustomed to receiving updates for both Windows and Microsoft Office via the Windows Update process. Now I have the Office 365 version of

Office 2013 installed on my Win8 machine and noticed that the Office updates arrived separately. Is this something new for Office?

A – Jay Ferron's response: The Office 365 version is "click to run" in that it "phones home" when it starts. This allows Microsoft to disable the installation if you do not renew your Office 365 account. If your computer is not connected to the Internet, after some period of time, this version of Office will no longer run. Because of this authentication process, updates are delivered outside the regular Windows Update process. All this is new to the Office 365 version of Office 2013, which became available to users in a gradual rollout spread over most of last year.

[**Disclaimer**: Ask DACS questions come from members by email or from the audience attending the general meeting. Answers are suggestions offered by meeting attendees and represent a consensus of those responding. DACS offers no warranty as to the correctness of the answers, and anyone following these suggestions or answers does so at their own risk. In other words, we could be totally wrong!]

Personal Archives

Preserving memories in a digital age

by Mike Hancock

MORE THAN 30 YEARS ago - in 1982 - videotapes came to the market. By now, though, many are degenerating. Alan Kolsky, of Digital Video Dimensions, startled attendees of the June 24 GGCS General Meeting by enumerating the probable life spans of various media:

- CDs 5 - 100 years
- Newspapers 10 - 20
- Data-grade VHS videotape 10 - 30
- Digital linear tape 10 - 300
- Other magnetic tape 10 - 30
- Microfilm 10 - 500
- Photographic slides 100
- Archival grade acid-free paper 10 - 500
- Egyptian stone tablet 2,000!

But people often want to digitize home movies, slides, videotapes, audio recordings, documents, and photos for storage and ease of presentation. Some authorities argue that because of rapid advances in technology enhanced media longevity is questionable.

Future trends that will affect archiving include higher resolution and solid-state storage. "4" resolution video format (4,000 pixels in horizontal direction) is coming and is needed for the huge monitors, which tend to have much softer resolution than smaller monitors.

"Ultra HD" is on its way, too. 64GB thumb drives are readily available, and solid-state drives are being introduced to computers and will displace mechanical drives and players. DVDs are ubiquitous today, but Alan warned us that improper handling can rapidly degrade them. Hold DVDs at their edges, across their diameter; do not handle them on their recording face, and do not handle them roughly. Also, avoid using paper stick on labels because they cause wobbling and thus poorer recording.

These factors affect the life of any media:
- Quality of the original media. Kodachrome slides from the '50s are still beautiful.
- The number of times the media are accessed.
- Storage temperature and humidity; store in a cool, dry place.
- Cleanliness of the storage environment.
- Quality of the device used to read/write the media.

To help keep your media in good condition:
- Keep media in its storage case.
- Avoid flexing or twisting any media.
- Do not touch exposed media.
- Do not expose magnetic media such as videotapes to magnetic fields (speakers, for example).

Alan recommends making backup copies of all digital media-two backups minimum for optical discs and hard drives. And re-copy them every two years or so. "High-8" tapes, especially from Sony, have a 20% failure rate, therefore they should be copied digitally and archived.

Tips for digitizing media

Alan suggests if you are digitizing home movie films to remember that film deteriorates and becomes brittle, and old projectors can accelerate damage.

With slides, look for at least 2,400-dpi scanners with no glass between the scanner and the film, otherwise you may have distortion from Newton rings, an interference pattern created by the reflection of light between two surfaces.

Canon is the best scanner brand for prosumers, or try to find an old Microtek 1800F on eBay. A 4,000dpi scan is the best, with 7,200 dpi being overkill, Alan says.

Document scanners are affordable at $500 to $600. Alan's advice for scanning photos is to scan at 600 dpi for photos 5x7 inches or smaller, and at 300 dpi for greater than 5x7 inches.

Scanning services usually charge by the hour: $15 to $25. Be careful about cheap scanning services; they work as fast as possible and not necessarily with consistent quality. Also, pick out only the best of your photos to scan to reduce cost.

With videotape, "repack" the tape before copying by using fast-forward and fast-rewind before playback and capture. It helps, too, if tapes sit in the machine for a couple of hours before repacking because the heat of the machine makes them more flexible.

The best DVDs for general purposes are Verbatim and JVC at the Gold level. Ritek is another good general purpose DVD. Meritline.com and Rima.com are good online resources if you buy at least 50.

Go to eBay to obtain a Sony VHS Adaptor for the High-8 reader and capture the output of a VCR.

Alan showed us a couple of examples of advanced mixed media montages with voiceover, comprising slides, videos, and music. An external service would charge about $6,000 for a 35-minute professional mixed media show.

Video editing software include Adobe Premiere Pro, Sony Vega, ProShow Gold, and Photodex. Be careful, though, of copyright laws when using, for example, Youtube video clips or music. Alan recommends paying for royalty-free music or looking for government newsreels.

If you wish to digitize tape, look for a Grass Valley Digital Converter that runs output to a computer (upward of $250), or an outside service will do it for $25/hour. Clean dirty or greasy DVDs and CDs from the center out, radially, using a cleaner (Radio Shack has one).
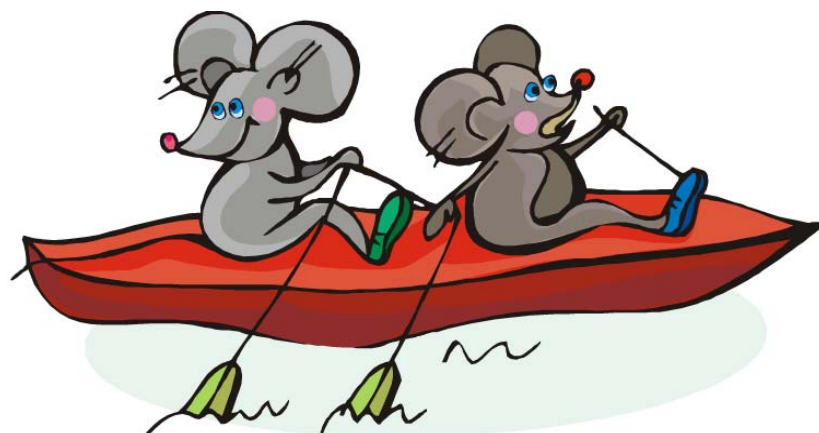
Judging by the numerous questions and comments, a significant number of the audience had boxes of material that were candidates for digitizing!

Mike Hancock is advertising manager, Golden Gate Computer Society, CA (www.ggcs.org).

When you come to the next DACS meeting, why not bring a friend?

Future Events:

March

Microsoft XBox One

Special Event: XP to Linux Workshop

April

Jeff Postolowski Android

May

John Patrick State of the Internet

June

TBA